

Hydration Needs for the Summer Season

Nutrition Newsletter: Summer 2016

Did you know that the human body is roughly 60-70% water? The fact is our body is primarily comprised of water and we can lose this fluid in various ways, including breathing, sweating and urination. Ensuring one is drinking enough water is important to whole body health and to prevent dehydration. Dehydration can lead to serious medical complications and signs and symptoms of dehydration include dry mouth, dizziness, headache and drowsiness. Proper hydration is something we hear a lot about, especially as the weather gets warmer, but there is a lot of confusion on how much water we need and what fluids are really hydrating. See below for some must know tips and tricks for hitting your recommended water needs and how to enjoy staying hydrated this summer season.



Water Needs: On average, most people will be properly hydrated by consuming 64oz (which is roughly two liters) of water each day.

Individuals who exercise daily or work outdoors should consider replacing the fluids lost through sweating. This would require one drinking roughly 7-10oz of water for every 15-20 minutes of exercise or work. Keep in mind that individuals 65 years of age or older, are at higher risk of dehydration. As we age our perception of thirst decreases and our bodies retain less water, so keeping fluids close to drink is important.



Hydrating Fluids: The best fluid to hydrate with is water! While the effect of caffeine on our hydration status has been debated for years, one cup of coffee or tea is in no way dehydrating. If you exceed one cup of caffeinated beverage each day try following it up with a cup of water to balance it out. This same technique can be done with alcohol, which can definitely cause dehydration. Try and have one cup of water for every alcoholic drink consumed to assist with reducing the severity of fluid loss. One should also avoid alcohol prior to an athletic event or a long day in the sun, to reduce the risk of even mild dehydration, which can hinder athletic performance.



Hydrating Foods: Drinking water and other beverages is the main way to promote good hydration but fresh fruits and vegetables also provide a good amount of water and typically comprise about 20% of our water intake. These fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and electrolytes which assist in maintaining fluid balance in our bodies. Cucumbers are 95% water and contain potassium and magnesium (essential minerals that play a role in hydration). Strawberries and cantaloupe are roughly 90% water and also rich in potassium. Celery has one of the highest water contents and at 96% water this green vegetable provides phosphorus, calcium and zinc along with a healthy dose of dietary fiber. Pack different types of fruits and vegetables, along with water, for all picnics and outdoor events.

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Cucumber Lemon Cilantro Infused Water

Adapted from www.infusedwaters.com

This water is very refreshing and has a clean, light taste that reminds me of spring. After exercising, the water is especially hydrating when consumed cold.

INGREDIENTS:

- Half an organic lemon
- 6 or more sprigs of cilantro with stems
- 2" of cucumber

DIRECTIONS:

- Infuse for 4-8 hours in a 3-quart Fruit Infusion Flavor Pitcher (or any water pitcher) and serve cold. If you are going to be infusing for longer, remove the lemon rind to prevent bitterness.



Fruit and Herb Infused Ice Cubes

Adapted from www.infusedwaters.com

INGREDIENTS:

- Basil
- Fresh Strawberries

DIRECTIONS:

- Fill an ice cube tray half way with water
- For herbs, you are going to want to rinse them and ball them between your fingers into a roll (or chiffonade) so that they are cut up into small pieces. Having more surface area will help the pieces to release more flavor once they are infused.
- For fruits, you will want to slice them thinly for the same reason as the herbs (more surface area will result in more flavor). You can mix and match ingredients in the same ice cube tray.
- Submerge the herbs in the water and press them down with your finger. The herbs do not need to be completely covered, but do the best that you can.
- Next, put the tray in the freezer for a few hours. The biggest hurdle in making herb-infused ice cubes is that all of the herbs float to the top, but that is why we only filled the tray half way: you are going to add some more water to the top of the cubes.
- After the ice cubes have frozen for a few hours, add a little more water to the top.
- Now, you can let these infused ice cubes remain in the freezer for weeks and probably even months. Just pop one out if you want to use it as an ingredient in infused water or if you are running out the door for work and don't have time to make infused water.

